



RIDEM LEAN GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE

CASE STUDY #2: Permit Application Center (PAC)

EVENT: Permit Application Center (May 2014)

PROBLEM: For some time DEM has been shouldering increasing burdens with reduced staff, especially with reductions in administrative roles. The issues caused by this became very clear during multiple LEAN events; primarily increased pressure on supervisors and poor communication with customers. At the same time, we've been hearing from our customers that consistency, convenience, and communication within DEM's application processes would be very beneficial to them.

SOLUTION: The PAC is part of our ongoing effort to improve customer service here at the Department. The idea for one point-of-entry for applications and customers came straight out of our Lean Government Initiative, and has been designed carefully to improve our operations. The PAC is a further step towards creating a Department that is more welcoming and responsive to the public. We aim to do a better job of communicating with individuals, businesses and other customers during the application review process. When applications arrive at the PAC, a quick review of specific items, which have been identified by the programs that will ultimately get the applications, will ensure that the customer has submitted an application that at least meets minimum qualifications to move forward for program review. The PAC will handle initial communication with the customer to confirm receipt and follow-up on any items missing from the initial submission. This will take away some of the burden from DEM's technical offices and give the customer some initial feedback on their submittal. The PAC also provides a welcoming reception area at our Promenade Street Headquarters for customers that come in to meet with our staff. Visitors for any purpose will now have a reception area where they will be greeted by DEM staff and either given directions to the appropriate meeting room or asked to wait for staff to come and get them. They will also be asked for feedback on their experience at DEM.

RESULTS: The PAC is a vital customer service tool. Specific metrics have been included in the PAC design which will allow the Department to modify the process as needed so that it continues to provide high level customer service and optimal benefit to DEM staff.